

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

SIX-TIME CALDER CUP CHAMPIONS 1965 | 1966 | 1968 | 1983 | 1987 | 1996

Friday | **October 21, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 44 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (2-1-0-0) continue their busy stretch while also seeking their third straight home win tonight as they host the first half of a home-and-home series with the intrastate rival Syracuse Crunch (0-0-0-2) at The Blue Cross Arena. The 7:05 p.m. North Division matchup will be carried live on 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks and Crunch will face-off a total of 12 times (six home and six road) during the 2022-23 regular season, the most against any single opponent for Rochester.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST SYRACUSE

The Amerks claimed the first two meetings in 2021-22, but the Crunch responded with points in nine of the next 10, posting an 8-1-1-0 record over that span. Rochester finished the season-series with a 4-6-2-0 mark.

The Amerks scored a power-play goal in 18 of their last 33 games against Syracuse, going 30-for-112 (26.8%) with the man-advantage over that span. Additionally, Rochester has collected at least one point in 25 of the last 43 games against the Crunch dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

JJ Peterka, one of five Amerks last season to earn a spot on Buffalo's 2022-23 season-opening roster, led all Amerks skaters with eight points in 10 games against the Crunch in 2021-22. ,

Both teams finished with 25 or more wins when leading after the second.

LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks erased a 3-2 deficit in the third period before newcomer **Anders Bjork** capped off the thrilling come-from-behind victory with the overtime game-winner 3:29 into the extra session to lift the Amerks to a 4-3 win over the Belleville Senators Wednesday night at The Blue Cross Arena.

Forward **Lukas Rousek** registered the first professional multi-point effort of his career as he tallied one goal and an assist while **Sean Malone** also produced a pair of points (1+1). **Brandon Biro** netted his first marker of the season before Bjork, who joined the Amerks on Tuesday afternoon after being assigned by the Buffalo Sabres, completed the victory in his Amerks debut.

Jiri Kulich, **Michael Mersch**, **Lawrence Pilut**, **Ethan Prow** and **Kale Clague** all recorded an assist in the win. The assist by Clague was his first as an Amerk.

Goaltender **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen** made 20 saves in his third consecutive start to begin the campaign. Dating back to the 2021-22 season, Luukkonen boasts an 8-3-5 record in his last 16 starts.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

In Wednesday's win over Belleville, the Amerks scored two first-period power-play goals for the second straight home game to begin the season, going 2-for-6 on the night. Rochester is 5-for-15 on the power-play through its first two home contests, for a league-best 33.3% conversion rate.

Dating back to March 18 of last season, Rochester has gone 19-for-57 (33.3%) while on the man-advantage over the past 13 home games. During that same span, Rochester has produced six multi-goal games, which includes both games so far this season.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Lukas Rousek	3	2	2	4	0	1
Sean Malone	2	1	3	4	4	1
Isak Rosen	3	1	2	3	0	-1
Brandon Biro	3	1	1	2	2	0
Linus Weissbach	3	1	1	2	2	0

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	3	2-1-0	79	.919	2.32

2022-23 CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Felix Robert	2	2	3	5	2	0
Alex Barré-Boulet	2	0	5	5	0	-2
Simon Ryfors	2	3	1	4	0	1
Darren Raddysh	2	1	3	4	0	-2
Jack Finley	2	1	2	3	0	2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Hugo Alnefelt	1	0-0-1	30	.882	3.80
Max Lagace	1	0-0-1	33	.868	4.62

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch	Rochester Americans
0-0-0-2	Record 2-1-0-0
0-0-0-0	Home Record 2-0-0-0
0-0-0-2	Road Record 0-1-0-0
0-0-0-2	Last 10 Games 2-1-0-0
0-0-0-1	Record When Scoring First 1-1-0-0
4.50 (5th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.00 (17th)
5.50 (32nd)	Goals-Against Per Game 2.67 (10th)
57.1% (1st)	Power-Play 33.3% (T-3rd)
100% (T-1st)	Penalty Kill 66.7% (T-26th)
5-4 SOL @ CLE	Last Game 4-3 OTW vs. BEL
Oct. 22 vs. ROC	Next Game Oct. 22 @ SYR



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BJORK JOINS AMERKS AHEAD OF BUSY WEEK

Rochester's offense was bolstered late Tuesday afternoon following the reassignment of Bjork from the parent Buffalo Sabres. On top of scoring the overtime-clinching goal on Wednesday night, the contest was Bjork's first AHL game in three years to the day of his last AHL appearance when he recorded two assists for Providence in a 7-4 win over Belleville on Oct. 19, 2019.

Acquired by the Sabres in 2021 from the Boston Bruins, Bjork last appeared in the AHL during a brief seven-game stint with Providence in 2019-20. In 30 career AHL games with Providence and Rochester, Bjork has recorded 23 points on seven goals and 16 assists. Bjork has recorded at least one point in each of his four season debuts in the AHL, totaling five points (2+3) and eight shots overall. Dating back to the start of the 2019-20 season, the Wisconsin native has produced nine points (4+5) in eight contests.

A 2017 Hobey Baker Award finalist at Notre Dame, Bjork is a three-time medal winner with the United States, including gold at the 2014 WJC18.

YOUTH MOVEMENT TAKES OVER ROCHESTER

With four points on two goals and two assists through his first three games of the season, **Lukas Rousek** holds a share of the team-lead with fellow forward **Sean Malone**.

Rousek, Buffalo's sixth-round selection (160th overall) in the 2019 NHL Draft, notched his first career multi-point game on Wednesday against Belleville as he had a goal and assist. He appeared in only 19 games in his first season in 2021-22 after recovering from an offseason injury, finishing with four points on one goal and three assists. Following the regular-season, he ranked second among all Amerks rookies with two goals and finished third among all first-year players with six points in 10 Calder Cup Playoff contests during the Amerks' run to the North Division Finals.

Isak Rosen paces all Amerks rookies with three points (1+2) while being tied for sixth in the AHL amongst all first-year skaters through the first three games. Rosen, the Sabres' first-round selection in 2021 (14th overall), spent the 2021-22 season with Leksands in Sweden, where he made his debut in the Swedish Hockey League. He led all 17-year-olds with the Leksands U20 as he posted 35 points (21+14) in 38 games.

At age 18, **Jiri Kulich**, Buffalo's first-round selection (28th overall) in 2022, is among the youngest players in the American Hockey League. He shows two assists in his first three games of the young season.

SCOUTING THE CRUNCH

Syracuse, playing its third of a season-opening three-game road swing, comes into the matchup with an 0-0-0-2 record through its first two games of the season. The Crunch opened the campaign with back-to-back shootout losses against the Cleveland Monsters last weekend.

Forwards Felix Robert (2+3) and Alex Barré-Boulet (0+5) pace the Crunch offense with five points each in two games, including a team-high five assists from the latter.

Entering this weekend, Barré-Boulet has an astounding 204 points (85+119) in 204 career games with the Crunch dating back to his breakout rookie season in 2018-19. The undrafted forward was named the AHL's most outstanding rookie and finished as the league's top goal-scorer that year with 34 tallies in 74 games, earning him AHL All-Rookie Team honors.

AMERKS-CRUNCH 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
JJ Peterka	10	2	6	8	2	-2
Oskari Laaksonen	11	3	3	6	2	-1
Jack Quinn	6	3	3	6	5	-3

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	3	1-2-0	6	.917	2.06
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	5	2-2-1	16	.917	3.28
Aaron Dell	2	0-2-0	9	.873	4.28

SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Alex Barré-Boulet	10	4	10	14	2	8
Gabriel Dumont	12	5	4	9	11	-3
Charles Hudon	8	5	4	9	16	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Max Lagace	4	4-0-0	7	.919	1.75
Hugo Alnefelt	5	3-1-1	12	.907	2.38
Amir Miftakhov	3	1-2-0	8	.901	2.69

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 22	W	5-3	22-24	0-3	5-6
Nov. 27	W	4-2	30-25	3-5	2-5
Jan. 5	L	2-1	18-16	0-5	2-3
Jan. 8	L	3-1	32-31	1-3	0-2
Jan. 19	OTL	3-2	30-28	0-3	1-1
Jan. 28	W	2-1	26-22	1-1	1-1
Feb. 19	L	6-3	30-31	3-5	3-4
Feb. 25	OTW	2-1	23-55	0-1	2-2
Mar. 2	L	6-3	24-33	0-3	4-5
Mar. 11	L	3-2	16-43	0-3	2-3
Mar. 13	OTL	4-3	25-44	1-3	3-4
Mar. 26	L	5-1	27-37	0-2	2-3

SERIES NOTABLES

Amerks defenseman **Chase Priskie** spent part of the 2020-21 season with the Crunch, notching seven points (3+4) in 15 games. In five games against Rochester that year, Priskie recorded collected assists.

Rochester assistant coach **Michael Peca** spent the majority of the 1994-95 season with the Crunch, where he produced 34 points on 10 goals and 24 assists in just 35 games. It marked Peca's one of two brief stops in his AHL career, the other being a nine-game stint with the Hamilton Canucks.

Crunch blueliner Ryan Jones spent the 2020-21 campaign with the Amerks, recording seven points (1+6) while being the lone skater to appear in all 29 games that season. Jones scored his first pro goal in Rochester's 3-2 win over Syracuse on Feb. 20, 2021.



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